

## Process for recruiting elders and deacons

*Many churches find it difficult and challenging to invite people into ministry positions of elder and/or deacon. People have various reasons for not letting their names stand, from not feeling gifted, to being too busy or just not wanting to take on such a role, to meetings being too long, etc.*

*The information that follows is a process designed by Ingrid Boonstra, Ministry Coordinator at Living Hope CRC in Peterborough, ON with some additional details provided by ServiceLink, the Volunteer Services program of the CRCNA.*

Often churches start their recruiting for elders and deacons around March, but the process below begins in January, for roles to start with the new ministry season.

1. Begin the process by inviting members of the congregation to submit names for Council to consider, as well as an outline of the procedure.
2. Each of Executive elders, Pastoral Care Elders and Deacons will also discern who will be potential nominees for their group only.
3. Current elders and deacons will meet in which names submitted by congregation members and those submitted by Council will be approved as possible candidates. Executive will select Council members comfortable and gifted to call potential nominees.
4. Those approved will receive a letter informing them of their nomination and of the process that will follow. They will also be contacted by phone:
  - Nominees will be told their name is up for nomination.
  - They will be invited to a Sunday morning Information Session.
  - They will be asked not to provide an answer at this time.
5. It is suggested that the information meeting be held immediately after a worship service and not last more than about 45mins – 1hr so that family members do not have to be kept waiting. Those attending the meeting will be provided with coffee in the meeting room so their time can be used effectively.

**The meeting** should consist of the following:

- Sharing Biblical principles of Elder and Deacon
- Testimonies from a current Executive elder, Pastoral elder and deacon sharing how they felt God used them in their ministry roles. Have them share any misgivings they may have had going into this role – their concerns, worries, fears etc., and then of course also the joys and how God worked through them.
- The structure of Council and Executive and their meetings are outlined.
- Answer any questions people may have at this point.
- Next steps: interview information packages are handed out at the meeting; they can expect a follow-up phone call to set up a meeting at which time they will be asked if they are willing to let their name stand.

**The interview information package** should include the following:

- Main vision of your church
- CRCNA vision
- Ministry handbook
- Job descriptions for each position
- Meeting schedule for the different roles (it may vary)

- Some minutes of last few meetings
- Biblical principles of Elder and Deacon
- Practical expectations for each role (can be part of the job description)
- Voting system used (ballots or casting lots)
- Explanation of staff roles
- Next steps (see #6, but also a date for when office bearers will be installed and anything else that may be helpful – possibly point out when a time of training and equipping will take place prior to the new ministry season starting, etc.)

6. Each nominated person will then receive a phone call shortly after the information meeting, from either a current elder or deacon – elders call potential elders (*elder team decides who should do this*); deacons call potential deacons (*deacon team decides who should do this*) – to set up a meeting to discuss this ministry opportunity one on one. During this meeting he/she can ask more personal questions and at the end will be asked to now prayerfully consider the opportunity and to let their name stand. A commitment deadline should be provided, or they can be asked to commit at the end of this meeting.

7. Keep lists for next year.